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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 75
Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw to your attention the statement made by Alexei Borodavkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council held in Vienna on 3 May 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as official documents of the Security Council and of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly under agenda item 75.

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**

07-33431 (E) 090507 110507

Annex to the letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Vienna, 3 May 2007

The situation in Estonia

Next week one of the great dates in world history will be commemorated — 9 May, the sixty-second anniversary of the liberation of Europe from Nazism. In most States, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 59/26 and in the spirit of the OSCE Ministerial Declaration on the Sixtieth Anniversary of the End of World War II, VE day will be solemnly celebrated and a tribute will be paid to the memory and the achievements of those who gave their lives in the fight against Hitlerism. The Estonian authorities decided to mark this great day in a different way. The Bronze Soldier memorial in Tonismagi Square in the centre of Tallinn was dismantled and the graves of the Soviet soldiers buried there were opened.

This was done despite countless appeals from the Russian Federation, a group of members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Estonian public. It was a gross violation of the norms of international law, particularly article 34 of Additional Protocol 1 to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which states that military gravesites may be moved only upon the request of the next of kin or in case of investigative necessity. It also disregarded the request made to the President of Estonia, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, by the daughter of Captain Ivan Mikhailovich Sysoev, who was buried at Tonismagi, not to transfer the remains of her father and of the other soldiers.

The memorial was dismantled on the orders of the Government of Estonia during the night of 27 April, in secret, in the hope that public opinion would be resigned to the commission of the lawless action and outrage to the memory of the fallen Soviet soldiers. But this hope was vain. Thousands of protesters took to the streets in Tallinn and other Estonian cities demanding restoration of the monument and inviolability of the memorial. This spontaneous protest was harshly repressed by the Estonian authorities, using rough force that exceeded all permissible limits. They resorted to the use of truncheons, tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets. People were seized in the streets, beaten, handcuffed and placed in detention. These people included journalists. There were not enough cells in Tallinn and the authorities had to transform the Tallinn port terminal into a temporary prison, to which according to the media they took about 450 detainees. The people thrown into this torture chamber took pictures with their cell phones and their accounts of inhuman treatment, insults and beatings bring back memories of episodes from the darkest days of recent European history.

According to media reports, since 27 April the Estonian police have detained over a thousand people, arrested 51 people, including NGO representatives, and wounded dozens.

As a result of the clashes which occurred when the Estonian authorities attempted to disperse the demonstrations that occurred in Tallinn in the night of 26/27 April in defence of the Bronze Soldier memorial, Dmitri Ganin, a Russian citizen permanently resident in Estonia, was killed. The Russian Federation demands that the Estonian authorities should provide full information on what happened, conduct an investigation as a matter of urgency and bring to justice those guilty of this crime.

Among the protesters, against whom the Estonian authorities used harsh repressive measures, were representatives of various nationalities. However, most of them were Russian-speaking, i.e. the group constituting almost one third of the population of Estonia which is still disenfranchised, does not have citizenship or full electoral rights and is subjected to linguistic discrimination.

The dismantling and transfer of the Bronze Soldier memorial and the reburial of the remains of the Soviet soldiers in Tallinn are perceived in the Russian Federation as a desecration of our sacred objects. These actions by the Estonian authorities evoke indignation and strong condemnation. The Russian Federation also strongly condemns the use of flagrant violence, insults and beatings inflicted on the participants in the Tallinn demonstrations. I quote the words of Sergei Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation: "I think this is disgusting ... This blasphemy cannot be justified ...". According to an opinion poll, about 80 per cent of the adult population of the Russian Federation shares this view.

I should like to recall that Tallinn — one of the most beautiful cities in Europe — survived during the war thanks only to the courage and selflessness of the Soviet soldiers who in the autumn of 1944 completed a 120-kilometre march and, literally on the heels of the retreating Hitlerites and the Estonian SS, rushed into the city and thus prevented its destruction. Tens of thousands of Soviet soldiers were killed liberating Estonia.

The attempt by the Estonian authorities to belittle this exploit, to erase the memory of it from public consciousness and to pin the label of occupiers on those who defeated Nazism is unacceptable. It is particularly alarming that in recent years Estonia has been glorifying the Estonian SS and fostering neo-Nazi feelings, and opponents of fascism are being subjected to attacks.

All this is perceived as an attempt to rewrite the outcome of the Second World War and will undoubtedly have serious consequences for Russian-Estonian relations.

We have more than once suggested in OSCE that measures should be taken to deal with what is happening in Estonia. Unfortunately, we have heard no adequate response. And the Estonian authorities have taken this silence as encouragement for their illegal and inhuman actions. The gross violations of human rights in Estonia that we have witnessed recently are the consequence of the indifference and connivance of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization — organizations that have granted membership to a country flouting the values on which European culture and democracy are based. In the end, the blasphemy committed in Estonia will certainly affect the Russian Federation's relations with the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance.

I should like again to invite the Chairman-in-Office, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the

OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the Personal Representatives of the Chairman-in-Office combating various forms of xenophobia to make an objective assessment of the events in Estonia and to demand that the Estonian authorities respect the memory of those who fell in the struggle against Nazism and stop discriminating against the Russian-speaking population living in that country.

The recent statements made by the representative of Germany on behalf of the European Union and by the United States representative are disappointing. Instead of condemnation of the illegal and inhuman actions of the Estonian authorities, concern was expressed about the peaceful demonstration by indignant Russian citizens at the Estonian Embassy in Moscow. Against the background of the sharp criticism often voiced by the Ambassadors of Germany (on behalf of the European Union) and of the United States on the subject of human rights violations attributed to the Russian Federation and a number of other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, their statements today can be viewed only as a new manifestation of double standards and bias. We regret that the European Union and the United States were not principled enough to make an objective assessment of the events in Estonia.

We categorically reject the accusations that the Russian Federation is not complying with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and is not ensuring the security of the Estonian Embassy in the Russian Federation. In fact, the fuss about this artificially created problem is designed to divert the attention of international public opinion from the illegal and inhuman actions of the Estonian authorities in dismantling and relocating the Bronze Soldier memorial in Tallinn and from the repression against the demonstrators in the Estonian capital.

A peaceful demonstration took place at the Estonian Embassy in Moscow of Russian citizens indignant about the desecration of our sacred objects and the cruelty of the Estonian police, who used harsh force against the protestors in Tallinn. Thus this demonstration in Moscow was provoked by the Estonian side itself.

United Nations A/61/897

General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 117
Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Financial situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The General Assembly, in its decision 61/555, decided on an exceptional basis to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount of up to $190,000, under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, subject to full reimbursement pending receipt of voluntary contributions for the financing of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The present report is in response to the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General report on the financial situation of the Institute for 2007 at the second part of its resumed sixty-first session, in May 2007.

A recent review of the status of the INSTRAW Trust Fund has revealed that the $385,000 in voluntary contributions received during the biennium 2006-2007 up to 30 April 2007 is insufficient to provide for the functioning of the Institute to the end of 2007. If the $190,000 commitment authority is applied, then the shortfall in resources required for 2007 will amount to $647,900.

Pending the decision of the General Assembly on the recommendations of the INSTRAW Executive Board at its fourth session and on the various options placed before it for the future of the Institute and its financing for the remainder of 2007 and beyond, the General Assembly may wish to consider authorizing an additional commitment of up to $647,900, on an exceptional basis, subject to full reimbursement pending receipt of voluntary contributions, for the financing of INSTRAW for the remainder of 2007.

* The submission of the present report has been timed to reflect the latest available information for assessing the financial situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

07-33488 (E) 160507

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its decision 61/555, decided on an exceptional basis to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount of up to $190,000, under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, subject to full reimbursement pending receipt of voluntary contributions for the financing of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The Assembly also decided to request the Secretary-General to report to it on the financial situation of the Institute for 2007 at the second part of its resumed sixty-first session, in May 2007. The present report is in response to that request.

2. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 60/229, on the future operation of INSTRAW, the General Assembly decided to provide its full support to the current efforts to revitalize the Institute and, in this regard, to provide it with the requisite funds to enable it to carry out its core functions for the biennium 2006-2007. It is recalled that the Fifth Committee, in its decision on the statement submitted by the Secretary-General on programme budget implications (A/C.5/60/16), took note of the indication in paragraph 18 of the Secretary-General's statement that "the provision of additional funds to finance operations of the Institute in 2007 would imply an annual subvention to the Institute, which is subject to the express decision of the General Assembly in this regard and to the amendment of article VIII of the statute of the Institute". By its resolution 60/247, the Assembly appropriated an amount of $1,042,200 for the biennium 2006-2007, to be used for INSTRAW should there be a shortage of voluntary contributions for its functioning in 2006. In 2006 the appropriation of $1,042,200 was transferred to the Trust Fund for INSTRAW in order to provide the Institute with sufficient resources.

3. Table 1 shows that at least some of the core activities of the Institute have been funded through subventions from the regular budget.

Table 1
Ratio of subventions to annual total expenditure

Year	*Approval*	*Total expenditure*	*Subvention from the regular budget*	*Ratio of subvention to total expenditure*
		(United States dollars)		*(percentage)*
2000		1 091 377	—	—
2001		893 878	—	—
2002	Decision 55/457	499 057	650 000	130
2003	Decision 57/580, resolution 57/311	479 776	500 000	104
2004	Resolution 58/244 (see also A/58/649)	876 205	—	—
2005	Resolution 59/260 (see also A/59/641)	1 284 342	546 200	46

Year	Approval	Total expenditure	Subvention from the regular budget	Ratio of subvention to total expenditure
		(United States dollars)		(percentage)
2006	Resolution 60/247 A	1 204 900	1 042 200	90
Total		**5 025 779**	**1 696 200**	**34**

II. Financial situation of the Institute

4. As at 30 April 2007, the Institute's Trust Fund reserve and fund balance for core activities was estimated at $218,100. The flow of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund during the biennium 2006-2007 up to 30 April 2007 amounts to $385,000. The Trust Fund reserve and fund balance for technical cooperation projects stood at $1,039,000 as at 30 April 2007. As shown in table 2, for the period from 1988 to 1996, with the exception of 1990, the flow of voluntary contributions for funding core activities amounted to more than $1 million annually. However, since 1997, the Institute has experienced a gradual decrease in its voluntary contributions, which, with the exception of the upturn in 2005, continued into the biennium 2006-2007. The contributions to the Institute for its special projects, however, have increased sharply since 2004. Currently, voluntary contributions for INSTRAW special projects are more forthcoming than for its core activities.

Table 2

Flow of voluntary contributions to the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women Trust Fund for core and special project activities

(United States dollars)

Year	Core activities	Projects (earmarked)
1987	697 685	509 774
1988	1 592 040	91 500
1989	1 105 151	330 800
1990	48 492	941 773
1991	1 845 489	265 073
1992	1 920 185	—
1993	1 570 201	—
1994	1 501 886	226 839
1995	1 323 093	—
1996	1 118 265	—
1997	718 009	—
1998	804 143	—
1999	540 188	15 000
2000	523 980	—
2001	347 396	50 000

Year	*Core activities*	*Projects (earmarked)*
2002	107 689	—
2003	377 657	6 154
2004	87 638	44 472
2005	929 361	648 818
2006	378 836[a]	961 912
2007	6 160[a]	1 077 260[b]

[a] The contributions for 2006-2007 for core activities reflect the contributions received and recorded up to 30 April 2007. Contributions pledged but not paid at that date to the Trust Fund amount to $322,100 (rounded).

[b] Includes voluntary contributions committed by donors but yet to be recorded in the Trust Fund account.

5. During the period from 1 January to 31 December 2006, the Institute incurred expenditures of $1,204,900 (rounded) under its core activities, including the costs for the current nine staff of the Institute (1 D-2, 1 P-3, 2 P-2/1 and 5 General Service). For 2007, the estimated requirements for the Institute's core activities, including the costs for the nine staff, are projected at $1,498,500, as reflected in table 3. The projected expenditure for 2007 is based on the revised estimated requirements of the Institute for 2007, to be reported to its Executive Board at its fourth session, on 2 May 2007.

Table 3

Current and projected expenditures of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women for core activities for 2006-2007

(United States dollars)

	1 January-31 December 2006 expenditures (a)	*1 January-31 December 2007 estimates approved by INSTRAW Board (b)*	*1 January-31 December 2007 projected expenditures (c)*	*Total 2006-2007 (a)+(c)*
Staff and other personnel costs	643 900	910 720	853 000	1 496 900
Consultants and experts	213 200	225 000	228 000	441 200
Travel	100 100	112 500	105 900	206 000
Contractual services	103 300	135 000	120 100	223 400
Operating expenses	54 300	102 000	81 800	136 100
Acquisitions	43 700	40 000	42 400	86 100
Fellowships, grants, other	—	—	7 500	7 500
Subtotal	**1 158 500**	**1 525 220**	**1 438 700**	**2 597 200**
Programme support costs payable to United Nations Headquarters	46 400	61 129	59 800	106 200
Total	**1 204 900**	**1 589 349**	**1 498 500**	**2 703 400**

6. The projected financial situation of INSTRAW in 2007 is outlined in table 4. The INSTRAW Trust Fund balance for core activities as at 30 April 2007 is estimated at $218,100 (rounded) after adjustment of the emergency reserve of $200,000 to meet eventual final INSTRAW expenditures. For the period from January through April 2007 expenditure is estimated at $442,500, and, with the anticipated expenditure of $1,056,000 for the period May through December 2007, the total estimated expenditure for 2007 would amount to $1,498,500. This would mean that the projected expenditure for 2007 was $90,800 less than the 2007 estimates approved by the Executive Board. As reflected in table 3, the estimates include staff salaries, calculated on the basis of full incumbency of the existing nine posts and the related operating expenses for the period 1 January to 31 December 2007.

7. The INSTRAW Trust Fund balance for special projects as at 30 April 2007 is estimated at $1,039,000, as reflected in table 4. If the approved and committed funding for 2007 not yet recorded in the Trust Fund for special projects due to the need for proper processing and bank clearances were included (see table 2), the available balance in the fund would be about $2,116,260.

Table 4
Estimated financial situation of the Institute in 2007 (as at 30 April 2007)
(United States dollars)

	Core activities	*Special projects*
Opening balance	564 200	679 900
Income received (as at 26 April 2007)		
Government contributions[a]	385 000	752 100
Miscellaneous and other income[b]	1 116 300	245 200
Subtotal	**1 501 300**	**997 300**
Total income	**2 065 500**	**1 677 200**
Less: expenditures (1 January-31 December 2006)	(1 158 500)	(323 100)
Less: programme support costs payable to United Nations Headquarters	(46 400)	(42 600)
Fund balance as at 1 January 2007	**860 800**	**1 311 500**
Less: reserve to cover eventual final INSTRAW expenditures	(200,000)	—
Estimated balance available for 2007 expenditures	**660 800**	**1 311 500**
Less: expenditures (1 January-30 April 2007)	(423 300)	(251 300)
Less: programme support costs payable to United Nations Headquarters	(19 200)	(21 200)
Estimated Fund balance as at 30 April 2007	**218 100**	**1 039 000**
Less: projected cost of operations (1 May-31 December 2007)	(1 015 400)	—
Less: estimated programme support costs payable to United Nations Headquarters	(40 600)	—

	Core activities	*Special projects*
Projected balance (deficit) as at 31 December 2007[c]	**(837 900)**	**1 039 000**
Less: commitment authority (General Assembly decision 61/555)	190 000	—
Projected closing balance[c]	**(647 900)**	**1 039 000**

[a] Excludes voluntary contributions of $322,115 not yet received.
[b] Includes $1,042,200, representing the total 2006 subvention.
[c] Rounded.

8. The projected expenditures for 2007 core activities represent an increase of $293,600 over 2006 expenditures, owing largely to anticipated increases in staff costs and capacity-building activities to be undertaken in follow-up to the research activities conducted by INSTRAW in 2006, as well as efforts to increase the visibility of INSTRAW work at relevant meetings. Although INSTRAW has established a resource mobilization strategy, unfortunately, given the current financial situation, voluntary contributions for its core activities have not been as forthcoming as anticipated. Consequently, the Executive Board could consider scaling back the activities initially approved for 2007 that have yet to be implemented. It is estimated that the Institute will require additional resources of $647,900 to function to the end of 2007, after applying the $190,000 commitment authority given to the Secretary-General for financing INSTRAW activities by the General Assembly in its decision 61/555. The Secretary-General is fully cognizant that the commitment authority of $190,000 is subject to full reimbursement pending the receipt of voluntary contributions; however, in the current financial situation, with pledged voluntary contributions not as forthcoming as anticipated, the Institute may not be in a position to refund any monies and the Assembly may need to consider the future financial viability of the Institute.

III. Various prospects for securing sustained resources for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

9. Given the need for urgent action to ensure the continuation of INSTRAW activities through 2007 and beyond, the Institute, in its report to the fourth session of its Executive Board (INSTRAW/EB/2007/R.5), has proposed several options for the Board's consideration so that recommendations can be made to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the financing of the Institute for the rest of 2007 and beyond.

10. The various options brought to the attention of the Executive Board by the Institute include the following:

(a) That the General Assembly should be requested to authorize additional resources to be made available to the Institute to ensure its operations throughout 2007, pursuant to its resolution 60/229;

(b) That the interim support for the core budget of the Institute from the United Nations should be provided until the Institute's gender architecture has been determined.

11. The secretariat will report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implications of whichever option the INSTRAW Board may recommend for the financing of the Institute for the remainder of 2007 and beyond.

IV. Conclusion

12. The General Assembly may wish to take note of the financial situation of INSTRAW outlined above and recall that in its resolution 60/229 it decided to provide its full support for the current efforts to revitalize the Institute and in this regard provide it with the requisite funds to enable it to carry out its core functions for 2007. Given the uncertainty in the volume of voluntary contributions that the Institute may receive to finance its requirements, it is estimated that, with the application of the $190,000 commitment authority approved by the Assembly in its decision 61/555, an additional commitment of $647,900 would be required to finance the activities of INSTRAW to the end of 2007. Although the estimated requirements for INSTRAW for 2007 are $90,800 less than the initial 2007 estimates of $1,589,300 approved by the Executive Board, the Board may wish to consider scaling back activities for 2007 that have yet to be implemented, bearing in mind the current dire financial situation.

13. The $190,000 commitment authority and the additional requirement of $647,900 are over and above the $1,042,200 appropriated under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 for INSTRAW, which has been transferred to the INSTRAW Trust Fund for core activities.

14. **The General Assembly may therefore wish, as an interim measure, until such time as it decides to pronounce itself on the likely recommendations of the INSTRAW Executive Board on the future of the Institute, to authorize the Secretary-General on an exceptional basis to enter into additional commitments up to $647,900, under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007, subject to full reimbursement pending receipt of voluntary contributions for the financing of the Institute.**

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 16
The situation in Afghanistan

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, have met in Ankara on 29 and 30 April 2007, upon the invitation of Mr. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, President of the Republic of Turkey.

At the end of this summit meeting, a declaration has been issued to reflect the common points agreed upon during the talks. The text of the declaration which, among other things, envisages the establishment of a "Joint Working Group" composed of the high-level representatives of the three countries, is enclosed herewith (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 16, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baki İlkin
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

07-33735 (E) 110507

Annex to the letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ankara Declaration

His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and His Excellency Hamid Karzai, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, visited Ankara on 29-30 April 2007 at the invitation of His Excellency Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the President of the Republic of Turkey.

President General Pervez Musharraf and President Hamid Karzai held comprehensive, cordial and useful talks, together with President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, on regional and international issues. They emphasized that the international community must work together to promote the objectives of Afghanistan Compact. They pledged to cooperate towards promoting peace, security, stability and economic development in the region.

During the talks, the Presidents of Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to continue to have dialogue and cooperation in all dimensions between the two brotherly countries and to combine their efforts to enhance prosperity of their peoples.

The two Presidents:

Agreed that their historical ties serve as a common basis to address all challenges hampering the stability, security and the development of their region and to enhance their cooperation, building upon the "Joint Press Statement" of 07 September 2006 issued during President Musharraf's visit to Kabul.

Agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations on the basis of good-neighborliness, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Acknowledging the great opportunity that exists for progress and economic development in the region, they pledged to work together to improve and strengthen the climate of trust and cooperation.

Agreed that extremism and terrorism are a common threat to both Afghanistan and Pakistan, as it is a danger to the region. They reiterated their commitment to continue supporting moderation, fighting all forms of extremism and terrorism through coordinated action. They expressed concern at the alarming increase in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and underlined the connection between terrorism, drug-trafficking and organized crime in the region, and emphasized the need for concerted efforts to combat these menaces.

Agreed to deny sanctuary, training and financing to terrorists and to elements involved in subversive and anti-state activities in each other's country and to initiate immediate action on specific intelligence exchanges in this regard.

Reaffirmed their commitment to enhance goodwill and create further confidence building measures and mechanisms, including through interaction between political representatives, civil society, academicians, media, and sports and cultural links.

Resolved to work jointly for facilitating orderly repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan.

With a view to monitoring progress on the above agreed matters and coordinating the confidence-building measures and mechanisms, the Presidents established a "Joint Working Group (JWG)" with the participation of high level representatives of the three countries.

President Karzai expressed the gratitude of the people of Afghanistan to the people of Pakistan for continuing to host millions of Afghan refugees. He also appreciated Pakistan's offer to host the next meeting of Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA).

The Presidents of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan commended the initiative of Turkey for hosting the summit meeting and appreciated the offer to organize further meetings towards the end of 2007 or early 2008.

Ankara, 30 April 2007

United Nations A/61/899

General Assembly

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Sixty-first session
Agenda item 80
The rule of law at the national and international levels

Letter dated 23 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

On instructions from the Government of my country, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a decision adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at the ministerial level, at its one hundred and twenty-seventh ordinary session, held on 4 March 2007, and a decision adopted by the Arab Summit at its session held in Riyadh on 29 March 2007, both relating to remedying the damage and the measures resulting from the dispute over the Lockerbie affair (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 80.

(*Signed*) Attia Omar **Mubarak**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

07-34205 (E) 150507 170507

Annex to the letter dated 23 April 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Remedying the damage and the measures resulting from the dispute over the Lockerbie affair

The Council of the League, meeting at the ministerial level,

Having considered:

- The note of the General Secretariat,
- The report on the activities of the General Secretariat between sessions,
- The recommendations of the Committee on Political Affairs,

Reaffirming its earlier related decisions,

Recalling the decisions adopted on this subject by the League Council at the summit level,

Recalling also the seriousness of the damage caused to the Great Jamahiriya as a result of the sanctions that were imposed on it,

Decides

1. To affirm the legitimate right of the Great Jamahiriya to compensation for the material and human damage caused to it as a result of the sanctions that were imposed on it;

2. To reaffirm the demand that Libyan national Abdel Basset al-Megrahi be released and that his continued state of detention be deemed that of a hostage under all international laws and practices;

3. To request the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of this decision and submit a report in that regard to the League Council at the ministerial level at its next ordinary session.

(Decision No. 6739 — 127th Ord. Sess. — Meeting 2-4 March 2007)

Remedying the damage and the measures resulting from the dispute over the Lockerbie affair

The Council of the League, meeting at the summit level,

Having considered:

- The note of the General Secretariat,
- The report of the Secretary-General on joint Arab action,

Welcoming Security Council resolution 1506 (2003) of 12 September 2003 on the immediate lifting of the sanctions imposed on the Great Jamahiriya,

Reaffirming its decisions Nos. 220 (fourteenth ordinary session) of 28 March 2002, 266 (sixteenth ordinary session) of 23 May 2004, 301 (seventeenth ordinary session) of 23 March 2005, and 342 (eighteenth ordinary session) of 29 March 2006, which affirmed the Great Jamahiriya's legitimate right to receive compensation for the material and human damage caused to it as a result of the sanctions that were imposed on it and demanded that Libyan national Abdel Basset al-Megrahi be released and that his continued state of detention be deemed that of a hostage under all international laws and practices,

Referring to the following decisions of the League Council at the ministerial level: No. 6679 (one hundred and twenty-sixth ordinary session) of 6 September 2006 and No. 6739 (one hundred and twenty-seventh ordinary session) of 4 March 2007,

Recalling the seriousness of the damage caused to the Great Jamahiriya as a result of the sanctions that were imposed on it,

Decides

1. To affirm the legitimate right of the Great Jamahiriya to compensation for the material and human damage caused to it as a result of the sanctions that were imposed on it;

2. To reaffirm the demand that Libyan national Abdel Basset al-Megrahi be released and that his continued state of detention be deemed that of a hostage under all international laws and practices;

3. To request the Secretary-General to follow up the implementation of this decision and submit a report in that regard to the League Council at the summit level at its next ordinary session.

(Decision No. 377 — 19th Ord. Sess. — 29 March 2007)

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Agenda item 117
Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Contingent liability reserve for the United Nations Postal Administration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to section III of General Assembly resolution 61/252 and the related observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in its report (A/61/480) on the report of the Secretary-General on the contingent liability reserve for the United Nations Postal Administration (A/61/295).

In the present report the Secretary-General provides further information on the issue of reducing the risk posed to the United Nations Postal Administration by the use of its services for commercial and bulk mail, describes options other than the establishment of the contingent liability reserve for the United Nations Postal Administration, the status of negotiations between the United Nations Postal Administration and postal authorities and further elaboration of the proposals contained in the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General on the contingent liability reserve for the United Nations Postal Administration.

07-33860 (E) 160507

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 454 (V) of 16 November 1950. A primary objective in creating UNPA was the promotion of the aims and activities of the United Nations to the rest of the world through the issuance of United Nations postage stamps.

2. United Nations postage stamps can only be posted at the three issuing stations, New York, Vienna and Geneva. The agreements with the postal authorities of the United States of America, Austria and Switzerland state that the respective post offices would be reimbursed for mailing charges for United Nations stamps. Over the past 20 years UNPA has paid on average 12.2 per cent of its income of $249.2 million for the period to the respective postal services for mailing, representing an annual postage charge of approximately $1.5 million. It can therefore be assumed that 12.2 per cent of the stamp sales have been presented for mailing and 87.8 per cent constitute a contingent liability inasmuch as there is the theoretical possibility that such stamps could be presented for mailing at any time at UNPA post offices. No provision has been made to cover such a liability.

3. In his previous report on this subject (A/61/295), the Secretary-General requested approval for the establishment of a reserve for contingent liability for postal services for previously issued UNPA stamps and approval, as an exception to regulation 3.14 and rule 103.7 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, for the funding of the reserve by transferring the balance of net income of postal services to the reserve until a ceiling level of $3.3 million had been reached.

4. The proposal contained in the previous report of the Secretary-General is in line with the recommendation contained in the report of the Board of Auditors (A/61/5, Vol. I, para. 477), in which the Board advocated that UNPA consider setting up a contingency fund from sales revenue to cover the mailing charges of pre-sold United Nations stamps in the event that customers might use the stamps in the future.

II. Update on the previous report of the Secretary-General

5. The likelihood of previously issued stamps being presented for mailing with the United Nations has been estimated by UNPA. Benchmarking information from other postal authorities was not available, as none have postal operations similar to that of UNPA. However, it is clear that the majority of individual collectors will not use the stamps from their collections for mailings since most collectors are not located near UNPA offices. As stated by the Secretary-General in his previous reports, there is a risk of bulk mailers presenting items to the United Nations for mailing using United Nations stamps purchased on the open market. Many previously issued United Nations stamps have no collection value. This is particularly the case for so-called "definitive stamps", which are issued in denominations suitable for regular mail delivery.

6. In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, UNPA issued "definitive stamps" in large quantities. These stamps are now being sold off, as collectors have stopped collecting them. Stamp dealers and mailing houses advertise in the philatelic market that they will buy UNPA collections at a price significantly below the face value.

These companies tend to be located near United Nations sites so as to use the stamps acquired at below face value at United Nations postal offices. UNPA has made efforts to restrict the possibility of such companies to using UNPA for the forwarding of mail items. Currently, United Nations Headquarters is the location most exposed to the danger of bulk mailers presenting items for processing.

7. In addition to direct appeals to stamp dealers using United Nations stamps for mass mailing, the measures described below have reduced the exposure of the United Nations to mail charges by 70 per cent since its peak in 2002. In 2006, the UNPA had gross sales of $6.9 million and paid $812,000, or 11.8 per cent of sales, for mailing charges. An estimated $470,000, or 6.8 per cent, covered bulk mail charges, $256,000 in New York and $214,000 in Vienna. The total costs incurred in 2005 for bulk mailing charges, as noted in document A/61/295, were $330,897. While remaining near the lowest historical levels, the increase in 2006 for bulk mail charges reflects the collapse of a prominent global stamp trading company in 2006. The company was a major sales outlet for many smaller stamp traders who had built up stocks of stamps from various sources, including UNPA, with the expectation of selling them to the large trading firm. Some of these companies are now using their stock to offer mail services. A limited number of companies concentrate on offering such services using United States-denominated UNPA stamps. In the light of this unforeseen event impacting bulk mail charges during 2006, the Secretary-General considers that the original estimate of a contingency liability reserve of $3.3 million (10 times the 2005 bulk mailing charges) should remain.

8. Effective 1 June 2007, UNPA is putting in place a new stringent policy to restrict large consignment mail or bulk mail, which is expected to significantly reduce bulk mail charges further while maintaining mail services for philatelic purposes, as outlined in the United Nations agreement with the United States Postal Service. The measures included in the new policy are outlined below.

A. Measures to limit mail charges

New York

9. UNPA's new policy restricts the use of the UNPA for mass mailing. All mail to be sent through the UNPA counter has to be carried by hand into the building and cannot be transported in large containers. It is subject to security screening, including the X-raying of all items. The absence of parking space further limits the amount of mail that can be brought to UNPA for mailing. Effective 1 June 2007, UNPA will refuse to accept mail that can be identified as "commercial business mail". The postal agreement between the United States of America and the United Nations only authorizes UNPA to "maintain a separate agency for the sale of United Nations postage stamps for philatelic purposes ...". Commercial business mail clearly does not fall into this category. As a result, such mail cannot be accepted by UNPA for forwarding and mailing through the United States Postal Service.

10. Since the submission of the previous report, UNPA has taken further steps towards the introduction of a surcharge or handling fee for mass mailing. When approached, the United States Postal Service did not object to UNPA charging handling fees for mass mail. In addition, the advice of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat has been sought to confirm that such a charge is compatible with the UNPA agreement with the United States authorities.

11. The United States Postal Service is also assisting UNPA to further limit mass mailing and is exploring the possibility of restricting the type of mail services offered by the United States Postal Service on behalf of the United Nations at the Headquarters, thus further limiting the possibility of using UNPA for such mail.

Vienna

12. After the introduction of the euro on 1 January 2002, United Nations postage stamps issued in Austrian shillings were accepted in exchange for euro-denominated stamps for a period of one year. Since then, UNPA no longer accepts mail using shilling-denominated UNPA stamps. Since UNPA has also reduced the overall volume of stamps produced and sold into the open market, euro-denominated stamps are not sold on the secondary market at a discount. As a result, bulk mailing using such stamps is not economical. Since UNPA is not likely to increase production to levels of the earlier trading years, it is not expected that a secondary market for discounted euro-denominated stamps will arise in the future. UNPA accepts commercial mail using regularly purchased euro-denominated United Nations stamps but charges a 10 per cent handling fee. Some companies choose United Nations stamps for their prestige and design. Since UNPA uses the Austrian postage discount negotiated by the United Nations Office at Vienna for these mailings and charges a handling fee, this is a profitable undertaking for UNPA and does not pose a risk.

Geneva

13. Following discussions with the Swiss postal authorities, Swiss Post advised UNPA that it no longer accepts external commercial mail under its agreements with the United Nations. Consequently, UNPA at the United Nations Office at Geneva no longer accepts commercial external mailing.

B. Status of negotiations between the United Nations Postal Administration and postal authorities in the United States, Austria and Switzerland

14. As indicated above, the United Nations forwards mail using United Nations stamps to the mail services of the United States, Austria and Switzerland for mailing. The UNPA offices in Vienna and Geneva are able to use the reduced postage rate negotiated by the United Nations with the local authorities for the overall mail volume of the United Nations. Those contracts are periodically renegotiated and re-bid and the discount rates adjusted accordingly.

15. The volume of first class mail processed by UNPA at Headquarters, including regular as well as UNPA mail, and the extensive pre-sorting requirements of the United States Postal Service do not allow United Nations mail to qualify for United States Postal Service volume discounts. This was confirmed most recently in February 2007 by representatives of the United States Postal Service.

16. The United Nations will continue its efforts to explore the possibility of obtaining discounts for first class mail for its New York-based operations. UNPA will also continue to work with the United States Postal Service to reduce or

eliminate the use of UNPA for mass mailing. The United States Postal Service has been very supportive of UNPA efforts in this regard.

C. Options other than the establishment of the contingent liability reserve for the United Nations Postal Administration

17. Should the establishment of a contingent liability reserve not be pursued, the primary alternative would be to continue the current practice of expensing all bulk mailing costs as they are incurred. While the absorption of small amounts of bulk mailings, as in the past, is possible, in view of the possible amounts involved, the absorption of increased costs could lead to significant, and possibly unsustainable, erosion in the real volume of resources available. As it is not possible to accurately foresee in advance if and when the bulk mailing risk would arise, the Organization may be unable to generate net income or savings of the magnitude required during a given biennium. In the light of this fact, in his previous report, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of a contingent liability reserve. Should bulk mailings increase significantly, the absorption of such expenditures is not an alternative that can be practically implemented as attempts to absorb increased expenditures would severely impact programme implementation.

18. Irrespective of the long-term funding of the contingent liability, it must be recognized that the financial statements of the United Nations are prepared in accordance with United Nations System Accounting Standards, which require that contingent liabilities be disclosed in the notes to the financial statements. As noted in the paragraphs above (notably para. 7 regarding an estimated contingent liability reserve of $3.3 million), there continues to be difficulty in estimating the value of the UNPA contingent liability for stamps that have been sold and that may be presented for mailing in future. Nevertheless, in accordance with the United Nations System Accounting Standards, the Secretary-General intends to disclose the nature of the contingent liability with respect to UNPA operations in the notes to the United Nations financial statements for the biennium 2006-2007, including the estimated value of such contingent liability as can be reasonably determined.

III. Conclusion and recommendations

19. There are two options presented: (a) the continuation of the current practice with the absorption of extra costs related to bulk mailings, as and when necessary; and (b) establishment of a contingent reserve as originally proposed in the previous report of the Secretary-General on the contingent liability reserve (A/61/295).

20. The continuation of the current practice involves an inherent commitment on the part of Member States to meet the financial obligations that may arise at some stage as a result of bulk mailings. While the utilization of the gains received in periods when net income is generated does not normally present a difficulty, there must be a willingness to meet, through additional appropriations, the additional expenditure requirements that may arise during those periods when there are insufficient funds.

21. While the absorption of small expenditures related to bulk mailings may be possible, the absorption of large increases in such expenditures is not an alternative that can be practically implemented. Any attempt to absorb such expenditures could severely impact programme implementation. Consequently, the creation of a reserve fund remains the best alternative method.

22. The establishment of a reserve fund would not necessarily provide greater predictability of expenses or overall net income, however, it would allow a mechanism at the outset of a biennium to provide for potential costs arising from bulk mailings that cannot be offset by net income generated. Unlike some reserve funds where Member States could be presented with an unnecessary financial burden by having to pay assessments in advance that might prove to be unnecessary, the proposed reserve would be funded by net income generated and set aside, thereby eliminating the need for Member States to pay in advance.

IV. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

23. The General Assembly may wish to:

(a) Approve the creation of a reserve for contingent liabilities for postal services for previously issued UNPA stamps;

(b) Approve, as an exception to financial regulation 3.14 and rule 103.7, the funding of the reserve by transferring the balance of net income of postal services to the reserve until a ceiling level of $3.3 million is reached.

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Report of the Peacebuilding Commission

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its field mission to Sierra Leone, which took place from 19 to 25 March 2007.

In his letter dated 21 June 2006, the President of the Security Council requested the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission on the situation in Burundi and the situation in Sierra Leone. The attached report summarizes in particular the gaps in terms of meeting peacebuilding priorities that will continue to constitute obstacles to longer-term development in Sierra Leone, and also highlights the important progress that the country has made towards achieving sustainable peace.

The mission was conducted with the aim of obtaining first-hand information about the situation in the country and assessing challenges to peacebuilding; discussing with the Government and other stakeholders gaps within priority areas for peacebuilding and the development of an integrated framework/strategy for peacebuilding; and communicating the main principles and purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission to stakeholders on the ground.

The mission identified a number of gaps in peacebuilding priorities, including lack of capacity and availability of adequate resources; a limited role and capacity of the legislative branch and limited dialogue among political parties; a low participation rate of women in the political process; economic insecurity due to poverty; lack of access to justice; lack of employment opportunities, in particular for the large youth population; the proliferation of small arms; inadequate energy supply; weak State capacity to deliver basic services; and continued instability in the region.

The mission also noted that the Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of the international community, has undertaken a number of initiatives to address those remaining challenges. In order to ensure that the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission with Sierra Leone strengthens initiatives and enhances

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peace consolidation efforts, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Commission have agreed to develop a compact as a medium-term framework for cooperation. The compact will serve as a framework for mutual accountability and will track commitments and actions to be undertaken by the Government and supported by the Commission.

The support of the General Assembly and the Security Council for the development of the compact and its implementation will be critical to its success. The Assembly and the Council may wish to call on all stakeholders, including the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone and the United Nations country team in Sierra Leone, and on bilateral and multilateral partners, to fully engage in the development of the compact and its timely implementation.

A critical milestone for continued progress in Sierra Leone's peacebuilding efforts, as well as for the development of the compact, will be the country's upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. Every effort should be made to encourage all stakeholders in Sierra Leone to support the upcoming elections and to ensure that appropriate follow-up mechanisms are in place to address any election-related challenges.

The completion of the Commission's first field mission marks a new stage in its work in ensuring sustainable peace in the countries with which it is engaged, including through the establishment of integrated peacebuilding strategies, and provides an opportunity to update the members of the General Assembly and the Security Council on developments and progress achieved thus far.

As we take up our task of writing the Peacebuilding Commission's first annual report, let me assure you of our commitment to keep the General Assembly, the Security Council and other United Nations bodies abreast of our deliberations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and the attached report of the Peacebuilding Commission circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 26, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ismael Abraão **Gaspar Martins**
Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission mission to Sierra Leone

19-25 March 2007

I. Background

1. At its fifth meeting, on 21 February 2007, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission decided that the Commission would undertake field visits to Sierra Leone and Burundi. The mission to Sierra Leone took place from 19 to 25 March 2007. The nine-member delegation of the Commission was led by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, in his capacity as Chairman of the country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone, and included representatives of Angola, Brazil, China, Croatia, Egypt, Guinea, Ghana and India. The primary purposes of the mission were to (a) obtain first-hand information about the situation in Sierra Leone and assess challenges to peacebuilding, (b) discuss with the Government and other stakeholders gaps within priority areas for peacebuilding and the development of an integrated framework/strategy for peacebuilding and (c) communicate the main principles and purposes of the Peacebuilding Commission to stakeholders on the ground. The full terms of reference and composition of the mission are set out in the annex to the present report.

2. The primary message of the mission was the assurance that the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission is for the medium term and is aimed at maintaining sustained international attention and support for Sierra Leone's efforts for sustainable peacebuilding. The Commission's efforts could include bringing together all relevant actors, marshalling resources and advising on integrated strategies for peacebuilding. An important outcome of the mission was an understanding and a commitment from the Sierra Leone Government on the next steps forward for the Commission's engagement with the country. The visit also reinforced the conviction that the Commission can play an important role in Sierra Leone, in particular in fostering greater dialogue and coordination among all stakeholders working on peace consolidation.

3. The mission met with the President, the Vice-President, the Chief Justice, the Speaker of the Parliament, the President of the Special Court, cabinet ministers and members of the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, as well as representatives of the major political parties, the United Nations, bilateral and multilateral partners, civil society and regional and subregional organizations. In addition to Freetown, the mission visited Makeni in the Northern Province and Kenema in the Eastern Province.

4. The members of the mission express appreciation to the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations team for their support and assistance during the visit.

II. General observations

5. Since the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999, the Government and the people of Sierra Leone and international partners have made significant progress in rebuilding the country and securing peace. The Government, with support from the United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral partners, has developed a

number of strategies for peace and development, such as Vision 2025, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Peace Consolidation Strategy, the Improved Governance and Accountability Pact and the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The mission noted a growing awareness that those strategies and the Government's engagement with the international community need to result in concrete peace dividends for the people of Sierra Leone. Capacity-building and the availability of adequate resources were highlighted as critical in that regard.

6. The delegation noted a number of positive developments in the political sphere in Sierra Leone, for example, in relation to the openness of the political space, media freedom and freedoms of speech and association. Since the peaceful multiparty elections of 2002, there have been many signs of institutionalization of democratic practices, such as the creation of the Human Rights Commission and the commencement of a process of constitutional review. However a number of shortcomings remain to be addressed, such as the low participation rate of women in the political process, the limited role and capacity of the legislative branch and limited dialogue among political parties.

7. It was highlighted that political developments need to be matched by progress in the economic and social spheres. The majority of the population remains extremely insecure because of poverty, lack of access to justice, lack of employment opportunities, high crime rates and corruption. The situation is even more difficult for young people and women, who face additional marginalization and discrimination, Many of the root causes of conflict, such as lack of employment for the large youth population, the proliferation of small arms, inadequate State capacity to deliver basic services, corruption and instability in the region, persist today. The important role of the Peacebuilding Commission in supporting the national Government and other stakeholders in their continued efforts for peace consolidation was highlighted in this context.

8. The mission also observed a generally limited awareness among all partners in Sierra Leone about the work of the Peacebuilding Commission as separate from the Peacebuilding Fund. Many stakeholders in the country remain primarily focused on the disbursement of the $35 million allocated to Sierra Leone by the Peacebuilding Fund. The mission of the Peacebuilding Commission to Sierra Leone contributed to clarifying the differences between the Commission and the Fund and that the Commission's engagement with Sierra Leone is for the medium rather than the short term and goes beyond resource mobilization. The mission stressed the need to ensure regular information flow between the Commission and stakeholders in Sierra Leone.

9. At the meeting with civil society representatives, the delegation was pleased to learn that a number of consultations have been organized by civil society groups in partnership with the Government and international actors to raise awareness about the work of the Commission and ensure the full participation of civil society in the process. The mission highlighted the need to build on this awareness-raising through capacity-building of civil society organizations and women's groups, especially in rural communities.

III. Key issues

Youth employment and empowerment

10. Youth unemployment was identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as one of the root causes of the civil war and was widely noted to be a continued threat to peace consolidation. The Government defines youth as the group of persons between 15 and 35 years of age, which includes 2 million people out of a total population of about 5 million. Two thirds of the youth population is unemployed and largely marginalized from the political system, and lacks adequate education and training. Significantly, many of the dire conditions that gave rise to the conflict in 1991 remain in 2006, with many youths unemployed, marginalized and lacking hope for the future.

11. In a meeting with cabinet members, including the Minister of Youth and Sports, the mission learned of a number of ongoing initiatives to address the situation of young men and women. In response to the growing problem of youth unemployment, in November 2006 the Government launched a youth employment scheme aimed at generating up to 135,000 short-term jobs for young people. The Government has also developed a national youth plan to address not only the question of employment for young people but also their full participation in the political process and protection of their human rights. The Mano River Union and the United Nations teams in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire have also selected youth employment as one of the areas on which to focus their work.

12. The President, a number of senior officials and representatives of civil society underscored that in order to ensure sustainable employment for youth, there is a need for economic growth and private-sector development, the precondition for which is the availability of electricity, water and other basic infrastructure. It was also stressed that in order to ensure greater participation of youth, especially young women, in the political process and public life, there is a need for capacity-building and review of discriminatory practices and laws.

Good governance

13. Sierra Leone will hold presidential and parliamentary elections on 28 July 2007. A national referendum on amendments to the Constitution is also foreseen during the elections, based on the work of the Law Reform Commission. Those elections represent an important milestone in the consolidation of peace in the country. A number of confidence-building and risk-reduction measures have been put in place in the lead-up to the elections by the Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of international partners, especially the United Nations, such as the Political Parties Code of Conduct, the Media Code of Conduct and support for the National Electoral Commission and the Political Parties Registration Commission.

14. Voter registration for the elections was undertaken over a period of 21 days in February and March. Over 2.6 million voters were registered, 49 per cent of them women. On the basis of the population census of 2004, the figures show that 91 per cent of those aged 18 and over have registered to vote. Election preparations appeared to be well on track. The delegation stressed the need to increase dialogue among political parties and build confidence among the general population in the electoral process and institutions such as the National Electoral Commission and the

Political Parties Registration Commission. It was also noted that due attention should be given to post-election issues, such as the acceptance of election results.

15. In a number of meetings the delegation discussed issues of corruption. It was noted that according to the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "endemic corruption was a central factor that produced the dire conditions that made civil war inevitable". There was a general sense that capacity-building efforts and a review of salary rates for public-service professionals should be undertaken as part of the anti-corruption work. The mission also stressed the need to provide additional support for the work of the Anti-Corruption Commission, which currently does not have the capacity to prosecute its own cases. Some of the development partners and civil society representatives noted that there was a growing perception among the population that the Anti-Corruption Commission is ineffective.

16. The mission also discussed an ongoing initiative undertaken by the Government of Sierra Leone and its partners in the area of good governance and strengthening accountability. In this context, the Improved Governance and Accountability Pact, signed in July 2006 by the Government and the four donors who provide direct budgetary support, was noted as a particularly important effort that requires further follow-up.

Justice sector and security sector reform

17. According to the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, failures in the justice system were one of the root causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone. A number of initiatives are under way to rebuild the institutions of justice in Sierra Leone and ensure access to justice for all. As part of the Justice Sector Development Programme, the Government has developed a national policy framework for the justice sector and a justice sector reform strategy for 2008-2010. However, the mission noted that in both the short and the medium term additional efforts are needed for legal reform, harmonization of customary and traditional justice, addressing the backlog of court cases, overcrowded conditions in the prisons and the low capacity of justice sector professionals.

18. In terms of security sector reform, the delegation was informed about many successful efforts, such as the professionalization and reduction in the size of the armed forces and completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. However, it was stressed that the living conditions of armed forces personnel remain poor and that 57 per cent of military personnel lack adequate housing. Continued efforts are also needed for the reintegration of former combatants, especially child soldiers.

19. It was noted by Government representatives and a number of development partners that the reform of the police has to a large extent been successful. However, a number of actions are still needed, such as strengthening the family support units to address issues such as gender-based violence, enhancing police-community relations and capacity-building and training for the police, especially in the lead-up to the national and local elections in 2007 and 2008.

20. While visiting Kenema, the mission met with the local police chief and observed police training exercises for effective crowd control. This effort of the Government of Sierra Leone is being supported by the United Nations and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DfID) in the lead-up to

the national elections in July. During a visit to a district prison and a district-level magistrate court, the mission discussed short- and medium-term challenges of the justice sector, such as the need to harmonize traditional and customary laws and address the backlog of court cases.

Capacity-building

21. The delegation noted an overwhelming need for capacity-building in the Government, the national Parliament and civil society organizations. In the meeting with the Speaker of the Parliament it was noted that the Sierra Leone Parliament is heavily dependent on the central Government and lacks the basic capacity to perform its role as an independent branch of the Government. Additional efforts are also needed to build the capacity of the civil service and ensure a higher proportion of women and young people in the civil service through the proposed senior executive service reform.

Cross-cutting issues

22. In discussing peacebuilding priorities with various stakeholders, the delegation observed the recurrence of a number of cross-cutting issues, such as the need to address gender and human rights concerns and ensure basic levels of infrastructure and service provision. While meeting with members of the Human Rights Commission, the Peacebuilding Commission delegation expressed the hope that the Human Rights Commission would provide the needed follow-up and monitoring for the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

23. In a meeting with civil society organizations, women's groups welcomed the setting up of the Constitutional Review Committee and called for the removal of section 27(4) (d) of the Sierra Leone Constitution, which exempts certain areas of the law, such as adoption, marriage and divorce, from protection against discrimination. The women's groups also stressed the need to support the newly created Human Rights Commission and expedite the consideration of the draft bills on domestic violence, on registration of customary marriages and divorce and on intestate succession in the Parliament.

24. All partners noted that energy is a prerequisite for development; without energy it would be impossible to attract foreign investment and develop sustainable economic opportunities for the population. The need to support the Government's efforts in this area was stressed in almost every meeting. In particular, the Government representatives stressed the need to complete the Bumbuna hydroelectric project in late 2007. Financing for the completion of that project has been envisaged to be on commercial terms; however, negotiations between the Government and the contractor have not yet been completed, and the outcome is uncertain.

Regional dimensions of peace consolidation

25. The Peacebuilding Commission delegation met with the Secretary-General of the Mano River Union and discussed the need to strengthen and revitalize its capacity to address cross-border issues such as refugees, the proliferation of small arms, criminal activity, smuggling of resources and remaining border disputes. The Secretary-General noted that the Mano River Union seriously lacks capacity to be

able to adequately address important regional issues relevant to peace consolidation in Sierra Leone and the broader region. The delegation stressed that subregional dimensions of peace consolidation are critical and need to be fully reflected in the Commission's work on Sierra Leone.

International support for the peacebuilding efforts of Sierra Leone

26. A number of bilateral and multilateral partners have been assisting the Government of Sierra Leone in peace consolidation and development. The mission learned that development assistance to Sierra Leone in 2006 amounted to $286 million, which represented a slight increase from 2005 and represented 30 per cent of the national budget. Development assistance is given in a variety of forms, including direct budget support, balance of payments assistance, support for programmes and projects and assistance given through non-governmental organizations and the various United Nations agencies. Four donors — the European Commission, DfID, the African Development Bank and the World Bank — provide a significant percentage of their assistance as direct budgetary support through a multi-donor budgetary support framework.

27. The Government established the Development Partnership Committee in 2003 to monitor the implementation of the benchmarks in the poverty reduction strategy paper and provide coordination for donor assistance. However, additional efforts are needed to enhance donor-Government coordination and dialogue. It was noted during the mission that some bilateral donors have withdrawn or significantly decreased their contributions, especially in the area of good governance. On the other hand, the Government expressed the view that the donors are not sensitive to the special needs of Sierra Leone as a post-conflict country with limited capacity to implement projects and report on some of the benchmarks. The Peacebuilding Commission could play a critical role in strengthening dialogue between the Government and its international partners as well as broadening the donor base in Sierra Leone.

28. The absence of a clear national policy on aid coordination was highlighted as a constraining factor for effective aid coordination. The need to develop such a policy in order to promote effective resource mobilization and allocation, strengthen dialogue among donor partners and the Government and uphold mutual accountability was stressed by the Sierra Leone Government and development partners. The delegation noted that the groundwork for an aid policy had begun in late 2006 and that there was a growing commitment to complete a full aid policy by the end of 2007.

Recommendations and next steps for the Peacebuilding Commission

29. The mission and the Government of Sierra Leone agreed on the need to develop an integrated strategic framework for the Peacebuilding Commission's medium-term engagement with the country. That framework will clearly outline the commitments of the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community. The delegation stressed that the development of the framework will be firmly vested with the Sierra Leone Government, supported by the United Nations, civil society and multilateral and bilateral partners through a consultative process. The framework will be used to assess progress and ensure follow-up to agreed

commitments. It could also support additional resource mobilization and ensure sustained international attention for Sierra Leone's peacebuilding process.

30. It was agreed that the integrated strategic framework for peacebuilding will build on and strengthen existing frameworks, such as the poverty reduction strategy paper and the peace consolidation strategy, rather than replace them. It will highlight critical peacebuilding priorities from those documents and increase the coherence of both the United Nations system and bilateral actors in addressing them.

31. The mission further clarified that the Commission's process of articulating a framework with Sierra Leone will not be directly linked to the Peacebuilding Fund disbursement, although Fund priorities will be covered broadly by the framework. The framework will govern the medium-term relationship between the Commission and Sierra Leone and will therefore extend beyond the role of the Peacebuilding Fund in providing an immediate and short-term response to peacebuilding challenges.

32. The upcoming meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission on Sierra Leone were also discussed, and it was noted that there was a need to hold two informal meetings, one on youth employment and the other on capacity-building, in May. Those meetings would provide an opportunity to learn more about the challenges and initiatives in those peacebuilding priority areas. It was also agreed that a formal, country-specific meeting on Sierra Leone would take place in early May in order to discuss the first draft of an integrated peacebuilding framework.

Annex

Terms of reference and composition of the Peacebuilding Commission delegation to Sierra Leone

1. The Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, at its fifth meeting, on 21 February 2007, decided that the Commission would make field visits to Sierra Leone and Burundi. The visit to Sierra Leone would take place from 19 to 25 March 2007.

Terms of reference

2. The mission has the following objectives:

(a) Obtain first-hand information about the situation on the ground and assess challenges to peacebuilding;

(b) Discuss with the Government and other stakeholders priority areas for peacebuilding, the development of an integrated framework for peacebuilding and how the Commission can best support national peacebuilding efforts;

(c) Focus the attention of the international community on peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone and communicate the main principles and purposes of the Commission.

Composition

3. The Organizational Committee decided that the participants in the field visit would be chosen on a regional basis, one representative from each of the five regional groups, plus one representative from among the non-members of the Organizational Committee participating in the country-specific meetings and the Chairmen of the country-specific meetings.

4. The delegation to Sierra Leone will include:

Frank Majoor (Netherlands) (head of mission)
Tete Antonio (Angola)
Piragibe dos Santos Tarragô (Brazil)
Wenju Cheng (China) (Ambassador to Sierra Leone)
Amir Muharemi (Croatia)
Mahmoud Yehia Ezzat (Egypt) (Ambassador to Sierra Leone)
Leslie Christian (Ghana)
Alpha Ibrahima Sow (Guinea)
Amarendra Khatua (India) (Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire)
Bartjan Wegter (Netherlands)
Ejeviome Eloho Otobo (Peacebuilding Support Office)
Vina Nadjibulla (Peacebuilding Support Office)

Annex to the letter dated 7 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 61/256 and 61/257

The Non-Aligned Movement participated directly, actively and constructively in the process of negotiation and agreement on the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to realign the Department for Peacekeeping Operations and the former Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Historically and traditionally, members of the Non-Aligned Movement have played a key role in the field of United Nations peacekeeping operations and in the multilateral efforts to achieve progress in the field of disarmament. In this context, the Movement considers that the decisions taken by the General Assembly on the strengthening of the aforementioned Departments, should make an effective contribution and add new impetus to the work of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping operations and disarmament.

As is very well known, developing countries are not adequately represented at the high-level structure of the United Nations Secretariat. The Movement believes that the new posts of Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Support and the Office for Disarmament Affairs should be entrusted to individuals from developing countries.

New York, 7 May 2007

United Nations A/61/903

General Assembly

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10 May 2007

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 105 (e)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 10 May 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly and, with reference to the forthcoming elections of the members of the United Nations Human Rights Council scheduled for 17 May 2007 in New York, has the honour to inform the President that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has decided to present its candidature for election to the Human Rights Council for the period 2007-2010.

In this regard, the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations has the pleasure and privilege to attach herewith a copy of the pledges and commitments of Bosnia and Herzegovina in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex).

07-33968 (E) 140507

Annex to the note verbale dated 10 May 2007 from the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Aide-mémoire

Candidature of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Humans Rights Council for the term 2007-2010

Voluntary pledges and commitments in accordance with resolution 60/251

The genuine commitment of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the promotion and protection of human rights is deeply rooted in its distinctive nature as a truly diverse multi-ethnic and multicultural society. Bosnia and Herzegovina truly believes that the development and well-being of its citizens can only be achieved through a culture of dedicated protection and promotion of human rights.

The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina is founded on respect for human dignity and dedication to justice and tolerance. The Constitution explicitly details that the rights and freedoms set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols shall directly apply in Bosnia and Herzegovina and shall furthermore have priority over all other law.

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms provided for in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina are secured to all persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

There are various specialized bodies with the role of further promotion and advancement of human rights within the governmental sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the Council of Children, the Gender Equality Agency, the Council of Roma Minority, the Council for Disabled Persons and the Commission for Relations with Religious Communities.

The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted the Action Plan for the Suppression of Human Trafficking and has concluded an agreement of cooperation with non-governmental organizations for the protection of victims of human trafficking. A national strategy has been adopted for the protection of Roma, the most vulnerable and numerous ethnic minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Action Plan for the Equality of Gender has also been adopted. The Action Plan for Children 2002-2010 is being implemented and supervised by the Council of Ministers.

The foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which emphasizes the strengthening of democracy and promotion of human rights, is based on assumption that the protection of human rights of every individual and the rule of law in general offer the best basis for global peace and security.

As a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Bosnia and Herzegovina has accepted the principles of the Final Helsinki document and fully cooperates with OSCE in the field of the promotion and protection of human rights. Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified numerous

international human rights conventions and treaties and regularly reports to and cooperates with the relevant United Nations bodies.

With its strong commitment to universal promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a democratic, multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious society, whose presence in the Human Rights Council would bring a perspective of moderation and pluralism, voluntarily pledges the following:

- To genuinely engage in constructive efforts to ensure credible and effective performance and permanently pursue a climate of confidence and dialogue in all activities of the Council;
- To contribute to ensuring that all decisions by the Human Rights Council are made in a consensual and constructive manner;
- To ensure that the Council functions as an effective framework to counter all human rights violations and crises;
- To cooperate fully and in a timely manner with all specialized bodies promoting and protecting human rights;
- To encourage States to comply to their reporting obligations and recommendations by human rights specialized bodies;
- To abide by national and international mechanisms and procedures to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all citizens;
- To encourage efforts by civil society and non-governmental organizations seeking to protect and promote human rights;
- To encourage efforts by governmental and non-governmental organizations promoting gender equality;
- To engage constructively in future reforms and advancements of the human rights bodies.

Owing to its extensive experience in the field of return of refugees and displaced persons, Bosnia and Herzegovina pledges:

- To assist and alleviate suffering of all war affected populations by providing expertise in the field of the return of refugees;
- To advocate the full implementation of the Convention against Torture and the abolition of the death penalty;
- To promote all resolutions and measures against intolerance, racism and all forms of discrimination.

United Nations A/61/904–S/2007/270

General Assembly
Security Council

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11 May 2007

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 13 and 14

The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of the highly disturbing escalation in the number of terror attacks by Palestinian terrorists operating in the Gaza Strip over the last month.

From Monday, 16 April 2007, until yesterday, Wednesday, 9 May 2007, 58 rockets were fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip at Israeli communities in the south. These rocket attacks included the launching of Qassams and mortar shells, 22 of which detonated in Israeli territory. The rockets caused injury to civilians and property, and numerous civilians were treated for shock.

These relentless Palestinian terror attacks are in violation of the November 2006 ceasefire, which was agreed upon between Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and President Mahmoud Abbas. The Palestinian government, which Hamas still plays a significant role in, must adhere to the three conditions of the international community, and put an end to the violence and terror against Israel.

With the continuation of Palestinian terror and violence, the prospects for peace in the region deteriorate. Over the past month, we have witnessed an intensification and a broadening in the range of the rocket fire. As such, Israel will be forced to consider alternative approaches to confronting the terror.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 13 and 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

07-34081 (E) 140507

United Nations A/61/905–S/2007/273

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Security Council

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11 May 2007

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda items 11, 62 (b) and 80

Prevention of armed conflict

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to forward a letter addressed to you from Mr. Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, concerning the issue of terrorism and the grave situation in Somalia, which I received today, 3 May 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 11, 62 (b) and 80, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Tesfa Alem **Seyoum**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

07-34136 (E) 150507

Annex to the letter dated 3 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Let me underline at the outset that my Government has been impelled to harbour strong reservations on the credibility and conduct of the UN Security Council. This emanates from repetitive, unsavory, experiences that it has gleaned in a long time. Notwithstanding this fact, allow me to submit our views and appeals in regard to some critical and timely issues; both for the record, and, for the sake of the respect of the rule of law as well as in fulfillment of our moral duties.

First: on the issue of terrorism and the "war on terror"

The underlying causes and rise of terrorism will doubtless require, even if uncontroversial, more profound appraisal and scrutiny. For reasons of brevity, however, I do not wish to dwell on this aspect of the phenomenon in this brief letter.

For a long time both before and especially after its independence, Eritrea has been tested as a target and victim of terrorism. This assertion is not derived from some abstract or speculative analysis. It is borne out by well-documented facts and events. The relentless struggle we have, and continue to conduct, to combat terrorism is indeed well-known to everybody.

The tragic events of September 11 were critical in heightening international public awareness about the real menace of terrorism. The "war against terror" that was launched in the aftermath of the tragic incident has however drifted with time to assume preoccupying dimensions. In more blunt and candid terms, it would not be an exaggeration to state that "the war on terror has now been derailed".

The fact is many governments and political forces are misconstruing the catch-phrase, in an opportunistic manner and outside its real ambit, to advance their narrow, dominant interests, to flout justice, the rule of law, and, as a convenient tool for fabricating pretexts (as "a means for an end"). These unscrupulous approaches and practices are engendering a spiral of ever-increasing annihilation of populations, disruption of societies, intermittent crises and instability in various regions of our globe. What is ironic is that all these transgressions are being justified in the name of the "war on terror".

Conscientious voices raised against the crimes perpetrated, or the convoluted policies pursued under the rubric of "the war on terror" are invariably undermined and quelled through the logic of deceit and intimidation. The search for appropriate remedies is being frustrated and becoming increasingly elusive.

Unfortunately, the UN Security Council appears to be oblivious to these crimes and transgressions that cannot be masked in any way. Had the Security Council shouldered its legal and moral responsibilities in the world as a whole and in the various sub-regions, the aberrations could have been avoided. Sadly, the Security Council has become hostage to its structural flaws thereby forfeiting its accountability to its international constituency. Rectification has accordingly become a pipe dream.

But the matter did not end there. The resistance of the Somali people to invasion continued fervently. The popular resistance was again dubbed as "terrorism" and war unleashed in Mogadishu and its environs with tanks and artillery causing the death of civilians and dislocation of hundreds of thousands.

All this happened under the watch of the UN Security Council. The atrocities and crimes are being justified as collateral consequences of the "war on terror" and at times, as damages incurred by clan in-fighting. The mendacious campaign to justify invasion and injustices through various bogus pretexts will no doubt continue. But until when?

The deteriorating and dangerous situation in Somalia will not abate in spite of the oft-repeated claims by the invaders that "everything is under control". History and the experiences of the last few years illustrate that force and deceit will not solve what is essentially a political problem. To believe otherwise is mere illusion.

The invasion unleashed against Somalia in the name of the "war on terror" has aggravated the instability of our region in addition to the human toll and destruction that it is inflicting on the Somali people.

To ask "where is the UN Security Council?" may be considered as naivety. As I emphasized before and irrespective of our expectations, we wish to put on record our stance for the sake of justice and the respect of the rule of law and loudly urge the UN Security Council to shoulder its legal and moral responsibilities.

(*Signed*) Isaias **Afwerki**
President
The State of Eritrea

United Nations A/61/906–S/2007/274

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2007

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 108 (m)
Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On the occasion of the International Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8, with the participation of the representatives of the United Nations, the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the European Union, which was held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 4 May 2007, the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq, upon instructions from their respective Governments, request the circulation of the final statement of the Conference as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 108 (m) and as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(*Signed*) Maged **Abdelaziz**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Hamid **Al Bayati**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations

07-34248 (E) 180507

Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic and English]

Final statement of the International Ministerial Conference of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8

Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 4 May 2007

Upon the invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Republic of Iraq, the Foreign Ministers of the neighbouring countries of Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and the Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8 held a meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 4 May 2007, with the participation of the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Arab League and the European Union, with the aim of helping the Iraqi people, their Government, and the Council of Representatives to build on the current political process, including the progress they have already achieved, in order to strengthen national unity, restore internal stability, promote inclusive political dialogue, achieve national reconciliation, and consolidate Iraqi sovereignty and independence.

Participating in the meeting were their Highnesses and Excellencies:

Bahrain — H. E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa

Canada — H. E. Hon. Deepak Obhrai M. P.

China — H. E. Yang Jiechi

Egypt — H. E. Ahmed Aboul Gheit

France — H. E. Philippe Coste

Germany — H. E. Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

Iran — H. E. Manouchehr Motaki

Iraq — H. E. Hoshyar Zebari

Italy — H. E. Massimo D'Alema

Japan — H. E. Taro Aso

Jordan — H. E. Abdel-Elah Al-Khatib

Kuwait — H. E. Sheikh Mohammed Al-Sabah

Russian Federation — H. E. Sergey V. Lavrov

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — HRH Prince Saud Al-Faisal

Syria — H. E. Walid Al-Moualem

Turkey — H. E. Mehmet Aydin

United Kingdom — H. E. Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett M. P.

United States of America — H. E. Dr. Condoleezza Rice

European Union — H. E. Javier Solana — H. E. Benita Ferrero-Waldner

United Nations — H. E. Ban Ki-moon

League of Arab States — H. E. Amre Moussa

Organization of Islamic Conference — H. E. Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

The participants agreed to:

1. Reaffirm the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and national unity of Iraq and its Arab and Islamic identity; the inviolability of Iraq's internationally recognized borders; and their adherence to the principle of non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs and good neighbourly relations with all its neighbours, stressing the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political system and common future; and control their natural and financial resources, and emphasizing the necessity to reach mutual compromises to all existing disputes.

2. Support fully the efforts of the constitutionally-based elected Government and Council of Representatives of Iraq to achieve, in a speedy and effective manner, the goals of the Iraqi people for a prosperous, free, independent, united, democratic and federal Iraq, and the basic right of all Iraqi citizens to participate peacefully in the ongoing political process.

3. Condemn all acts of terrorism in all its forms in Iraq, notably against civilians, infrastructure, government institutions and holy places, and call for the immediate cessation of all such acts in order to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and preserve the lives of the innocent and respect for their human rights, emphasizing their commitment to ensure respect for international law, and particularly for international humanitarian law.

4. Reaffirm, in this context, the obligation of all States, in accordance with international law, relevant international agreements and resolution 1546 of the United Nations Security Council and its other relevant resolutions, to combat terrorist activities and prevent the use by terrorists of their territory for supplying, organizing and launching terrorist operations; specifically they reiterate their call to prevent the transit of terrorists and arms to and from Iraq and re-emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between Iraq and its neighbouring countries to control their common borders.

5. Support the efforts of the Government of Iraq to strengthen national unity, ensure the safety and security of the Iraqi people, end violence, and further expand political participation by actively engaging all components of the Iraqi people in the ongoing political process and acting in a manner that ensures inclusiveness and paves the way for the success of national reconciliation; they encourage such inclusivity, reaffirm the commitment of the participants to help the Iraqi people achieve these objectives and call upon all components of the Iraqi people to participate actively in the political process.

6. Commend and encourage the Government of Iraq in its commitment to protect the people of Iraq by confronting violence without regard to sect or ethnicity; emphasize the importance of addressing sectarianism and disarming and dismantling all militias and illegally armed groups without exception; and reaffirm the necessity of eliminating terrorism, in accordance with international law, as the best means of ensuring the authority of the State, promoting national reconciliation and alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people.

7. Stress the need to assist the Government of Iraq in building up its defence and security forces on a national and professional basis; welcome offers by Arab and other countries to support the development of the professional capabilities of the Iraqi armed forces; and renew their support for the Government of Iraq's efforts to accelerate the preparedness of its armed forces to assume full security and defence

responsibilities in their country, which will pave the way for the conclusion of the mandate of the multinational forces, whose presence will not be open-ended, and will terminate upon the request of and in accordance with timing to be agreed by the Government of Iraq pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1546 and 1723.

8. Encourage all the relevant competent Iraqi authorities to continue constructive steps towards reviewing the Constitution, and other important legislation, including the de-baathification law, according to agreed constitutional mechanisms and in a manner that will promote national reconciliation.

9. Affirm that it is the responsibility of the Iraqi Government to pursue the above-mentioned objectives; the participants express their readiness to support the Government of Iraq in its efforts to achieve an inclusive and democratic Iraqi political system and a government of national unity for all Iraqis, and emphasize that the spirit of Iraqi citizenship should be the basis for building the new Iraq.

10. Support the establishment of the working groups headed by the Government of Iraq, and other working groups formed as requested by that government and as agreed with the participants in this conference, by active participation and the provision of technical assistance in the fields of energy and electricity, security and protection of both sides of common borders; and assistance to Iraqi displaced persons inside and outside Iraq; and call for the expeditious convening of these working groups.

11. Recognize the obligation of the international community in conformity with refugee and international humanitarian law to protect and assist displaced Iraqis and help neighbouring countries in addressing their immediate and foreseeable needs and guaranteeing their safety, by implementing the Framework agreed upon at the UNHCR International Conference on Iraq held in Geneva on 17 and 18 April 2007.

12. Commend, in this context, the efforts made by States hosting Iraqi displaced persons, in particular Syria and Jordan, and express their readiness to provide necessary assistance aimed at easing the suffering of the Iraqi people, and encourage the efforts exerted by the Iraqi Government to shoulder its responsibility vis-à-vis its citizens and to create the appropriate atmosphere for the safe return of displaced persons to their homes.

13. Emphasize once again the importance of the support of the United Nations, and the need to strengthen its central role in coordinating international assistance and in supporting the political process and national reconciliation; and welcome the role played by the League of Arab States to activate its national reconciliation initiative and call for the resumption of preparations to convene the reconciliation conference under its auspices at the earliest possible date. They also welcome the effective contribution of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the ongoing political process and its instrumental role in encouraging tolerance between the different sects in Iraq.

14. Welcome the launching of the International Compact with Iraq on 3 May 2007, in Sharm El-Sheikh, and call upon all countries to fulfil their commitments in this regard.

15. Commend the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq, Egypt and Bahrain for their continued efforts and meetings to discuss the developments in the political process

and ways and means of helping Iraq to achieve stability, security, unity and territorial integrity, and look forward to their future meetings.

16. Reiterate the importance of bringing to justice members of the previous Iraqi regime who committed war crimes against Kuwait and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and crimes against humanity against the Iraqi people.

17. Note with satisfaction the increasing international engagement with regard to Iraq in different forums, such as the Sharm El-Sheikh meeting that took place on 23 November 2004, the Brussels Conference in June 2005 and the Baghdad meeting of 10 March 2007, and underline their readiness to continue to contribute to such multilateral initiatives.

18. With the agreement of the Government of Iraq, establish a follow-up group composed of their senior officials to regularly review progress in implementing the conclusions reached at this conference.

19. Express their appreciation to the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the conference, and agree to hold their next ministerial meeting in Istanbul, Turkey.

United Nations A/61/907–S/2007/276

General Assembly
Security Council

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English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 13
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical table of Israeli violations during the month of April 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 13, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

07-34235 (E) 150507 170507

Annex to the identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statistical table showing Israeli violations during April 2007

Air violations				*Sea violations*	*Land violations*			*Total*	*Grand total*	*Previous month's total*
Military jet	*Reconnaissance*	*Helicopter*	*Total*		*Military acts of aggression*	*Field violations*	*Breaches*			
				Crossing of territorial waters, and firing of automatic-weapons rounds, flares and flare shells over territorial waters	Air raids, artillery shelling, shelling of military outposts and important positions, attacks on and killing of civilians	Gunfire, shooting of flare shells, shining of searchlights, dropping of artillery missiles and poison-gas balloons, infiltration and crossing of international borders	Threats and display of weapons, bulldozing of soil, laying of barbed wire and setting up of installations inside Lebanese territory			
13	24	1	38	4	—	8	3	11	53	71

United Nations A/61/908–S/2007/277

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 13
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On the instructions of my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations between 28 April and 1 May 2007 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 13, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

07-34242 (E) 160507 170507

Annex to the identical letters dated 10 May 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

At 1055 hours on 28 April 2007, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Tibnin detachment zone at medium altitude.

At 1310 hours on the same date, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl detachment zone at medium altitude.

At 1600 hours on the same date, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the occupied Shab`a farmlands at medium altitude.

At 0830 hours on 29 April 2007, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl detachment zone at medium altitude.

At 2010 hours on the same date, enemy Israeli helicopter aircraft overflew the occupied Shab`a farmlands at medium altitude.

At 1000 hours on 1 May 2007, on the outskirts of al-Qulay`ah in the Marj`ayun district, an unexploded B-7 rocket left behind by the Israeli enemy was found, and a military specialist was dispatched to deal with it.

At 1430 hours on 30 April 2007, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the Tyre-Qulaylah area at medium altitude.

At 2200 hours on 30 April 2007, an enemy Israeli reconnaissance aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl area at high altitude.

At 0730 hours on 1 May 2007, two enemy Israeli military bulldozers crossed the Lebanese border on the outskirts of the town of Rumaysh at the Sa`sa` location, and proceeded to bulldoze some land and shrubs 40 metres outside the barbed-wire strip. They continued bulldozing activities until 1030 hours on the same date. The two bulldozers then retreated along the barbed-wire strip and continued bulldozing activities and earth collection at the point where they had crossed.

At 0930 hours on 1 May 2007, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the Bint Jubayl area at high altitude.

At 0955 hours on the same date, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the Marj`ayun area at medium altitude.

At 1000 hours on the same date, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the Tibnin area at medium altitude.

At 1100 hours on the same date, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the `Abbasiyyah area at low altitude.

At 1200 hours on 1 May 2007, enemy Israeli military aircraft overflew the Tyre area at medium altitude.